

The

7

Best
Lessons
From All The
Self-Help Books

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Public Domain
2023

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Introduction

A lot of people in our world read a ton of self-help to never use it or at the very least never make proper use of it. Why? Information overload. There is so much out there so they feel the need to read the next book thinking it holds some secret that the last one did not. (And what they did learn in the last book they soon forget with "new" knowledge, so they act on none.) Truth is all self-help books say the same things over and over again. All that "new" information can be found in the first two modern self-help books, *How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie and *Think and Grow Rich* by Napoleon Hill published way back in 1936 and 1937, respectively. (If you want to go even further back, a lot of religious texts say the exact same things, though more cryptically. They were the real *first* self-help books.) If it wasn't for the fact that those two books are overloaded with stories and not tightly organized (they were written for a different era), I would just suggest you read those. (However, along with Zig Ziglar's material and religious books, they make for great audiobooks to listen to.) But that is the purpose of this book, to condense and distill all of the best self-help material in the world to curve your appetite for more information, to help you stop reading about how to live a great life and to start living one instead. Here's the best self-help material out there in seven easy-to-remember rules. But, in reality, this is really *all* the self-help material out there grouped into 7 categories.

There Are Universal Laws to Be Discovered for Your Advantage

"The beginning of wisdom is: Acquire wisdom." —Proverbs

You *can* replicate the success of the successful. Why? Because everything in life is cause and effect. Everything can be explained and duplicated. So all problems can be fixed. All situations can be turned to your advantage as long as you are willing to change your actions and thoughts. This also means there are laws of human nature everyone obeys, including yourself. Discover them. Become aware right now what you are doing with your life. Become aware right now what you've done with your life that put you here. If you don't become aware, you'll just keep repeating the same mistakes, the same habits. Understand by not taking advantage of these laws of the living you have gotten yourself in your current situation. And understand that your current situation could be much better if you took advantage of these laws. The grass is greener on the other side.

The truth is, we often make bad decisions with our lives, practice bad habits, or don't take action because we believe life is too hard to figure out. Instead of thinking for ourselves, we ignore our problems, tough it out, or blindly follow someone's bad advice no matter how much it hurts. But here's the catch, the laws of wisdom have a beautiful simplicity to them and they are easy to implement. **That means the answers to your life are simple ones.** The man who studies a little each day in his chosen field will eventually become a master in it. There is no complex riddle for him to solve to get what he wants. He just has to understand the simple law of consistency. It is wisdom, not self-help tricks, that will get you what you want in life. Find these laws, internalize them, and practice them. Life is not too hard to figure out, you simply need an open mind and a willingness to try new things. The first law of wisdom is to seek wisdom.

Discover the truth.

Be Consistent, It Compounds over Time

"All people are the same; it is their habits that set them apart."

—Confucius

There is a reason why self-help books like *The Compound Effect* and *The Slight Edge* are some of the few, if not the only, ones out there with over 1,000 reviews and 5 stars on Amazon. Don't quit. **Put in the work each day and over time you'll get results.** It adds up, if you are consistent, to eventually make a huge difference. Put in the work each day (you don't have to work *hard*, you just have to put in the work) and you'll have more skills and knowledge than you thought possible. Practice makes perfect, as long as you give yourself enough time to practice. Want to deliver an awesome speech? Practice it once or twice each day several days before you give it. Want to create the next Game of Thrones series? Practice writing each day from an early age. Learn to enjoy the process. Get lost in the art. Be patient. **Being patient is the central theme to putting in the work.** If you aren't patient, then you will either give up, distract yourself from doing the work, or try shortcuts. All will result in your failure to be consistent. And often we are impatient because we feel like we are too old or that time is running out. But that mindset is the thing that is causing you to waste your life. But it's never too late to become what you want. Tell yourself to forget about those thoughts and just focus on putting in the work each day. Let yourself get caught up in the process. Learn to enjoy the hard part and that is when consistency becomes easy. But when time sinks (bad habits) come, remind yourself of what you really want in life, remind yourself of who you are doing it for. It's a narrow path and that is why few control their destinies. You must realize the world owes you nothing, but you can *slowly* earn what you want. Learn to be patient and put in the work.

Work each day.

Be Mindful About Who You Let into Your Life

"Suffering leads to evil. Evil to suffering. Happiness leads to goodness. Goodness to happiness. Have pity on the man who suffers. But do not let him take you down his path. Avoid evil. Encourage the good." —Unknown

The science is clear, people have a stronger impact on your life than anything else—this includes your emotions, your success, your choices, your happiness, and perhaps even your health. Those with better relationships have longer telomeres, lower inflammation, and lower rates of heart disease. This is often why the poorest people in the poorest countries are some of the healthiest and happiest as they often have some of the best relationships in the world. We are social creatures. We are really just cells of a larger body called the human race. We need each other not just to survive but to thrive. And the science backs this up. Human touch is a *requirement* for a healthy, fulfilling life. It activates our relaxation mechanism (specifically the vagus nerve) to help our body regulate functions like our blood pressure, liver, kidneys, and digestive processes and you won't get that living in your room alone all the time. You need people. You need community. And a sense of community is the number one predictor of a happy, fulfilling life.

But know this, you can get to know people, but you can never unknow them. So stay away from those who are trouble. As Proverbs says, "The prudent sees evil and hides himself, but the simple go on and suffer for it." (How do you know if someone is bad news? Simple, you trust your intuition and look for those red flags. As Maya Angelou said, "When someone shows you who they are, believe them the first time.") However, the opposite is also true. Proverbs again, "He who walks with the wise shall be wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm." And the power of association is backed up by science. If your friends become fat, you are more likely to become fat. If your friends start to work out, you're more likely to work out. Association is always the number one predictor of action, results, and success. And it is seen by many as the number one accelerator to accomplishing your dreams. So it's no wonder that in Jim

Rohn's book, *7 Strategies for Wealth & Happiness*, he dedicates an entire strategy to surrounding yourself with good people in life. Thus, the wise thing to do would be to surround yourself with people you want to be like. As Jim Rohn puts it, **"You are the average of the five people you spend the most time with."** Or as Proverbs puts it, **"He who walks with the wise shall be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed."** So be careful of who you spend your time with. Look for those who are positive, energetic, kind, and a personal success (forget about wealth, what you care about is happiness as a measure of their success). Search for that community that will make you happy.

However, it's not just about letting kind people in our lives, but it's also about getting help from others. You're not just the average of them, but people—your relationships—are the only way to get the life you want. As Bob Beaudine has said, **"We're not designed to 'Go it alone!'"** As Proverbs says, **"He who has isolated himself seeks his own foolish desires; he rejects all sound advice."** We need the help of others to be our best selves and to make good decisions in life. So work on and maintain your relationships. A mentor or coach can give you the breakthrough you are looking for as they can see your blind spots and hold you accountable. But that kind of mentoring relationship must come from someone who really cares about you (which probably isn't someone you would be paying money to). Sometimes all we really need is a good friend to talk to about our problems. Actually, what you want is a group of friends who can advise you on different things, a type of personal board of advisors for all your different problems and plans in life. Proverbs yet again, **"Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed."** But if you don't have a friend to talk to about your problems, the fastest way to find a friend isn't to meet new people one at a time, but to join groups until you find one that clicks (it *will* take time to find one that clicks, but it's worth it). So join different groups until you find one that gives you a good feeling, until you feel like you are somewhere you belong. But it takes time to find friends. It takes time to find your future girlfriend or boyfriend. It takes time to find your group. Learn to be patient. Learn to be consistent. You *will* get results. And you really only have time in life for one group of friends. So one is all you need. Once you find that one group, you're done. You just have to follow up and keep in touch. And

with a group of friends to support you, it'll be a lot easier to accomplish your goals, it'll be a lot easier to get rid of the bad in your life. For your best life, you must remove negative people and actively seek good, healthy relationships. Crowd out the bad with the good.

Surround yourself with good people.

Communication is the Key to Happiness and Success

"Of all the life skills available to us, communication is perhaps the most empowering." —Bret Morrison

Pain and misery come when people don't communicate. You never get what you want since no one knows what it is that you want. **Always tell people what is on your mind. Always tell people what it is you want.** Tell the truth of the situation. Don't suffer in silence. Speak up! If something or someone is bothering you, tell them or tell someone else. If they don't care, then you need to find a new group to be around that does. But don't try to handle your problems alone, that's a fool's errand. We need people. However, good communication is a two-way street so don't be afraid to find out what is going on in other people's heads. That's how *real* relationships work. You must learn what it is that they want or else the relationship (you're in a relationship with everyone you interact with) will never work and will cause you and them harm.

Good communication from you, however, doesn't mean more communication. It means better understanding. And excessive words can end up confusing, hurting, or enraging people. So guard and limit what you say to only what is necessary. Don't get yourself in trouble. Words are powerful gateways to emotions. As Proverbs says, **"Those who guard their lips preserve their lives, but those who speak rashly will come to ruin."** And it also says, "The tongue can bring life or death; those who love to talk will reap the consequences." When you talk about people and things badly, it can be like rubbing a match against black powder. You don't know when it'll go off, but you know it'll be bad when it does. So be careful when you complain about people or things. However, the words you pick to express yourself can be just as damaging, as they can either slowly blister your inner kindness or gently illuminate it. They can not only bring down your spirit but also the spirit of others. So try to remove all curse words, demeaning words, and negative words from your speech and writing. **The tongue has the power of life and death.** That means your words can also heal and inspire. Choose your words wisely.

Communicate with others.

Happiness & Success Comes from Loving, Giving, and Caring for Others

"Life is all about other people."

As Proverbs says, "One person gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty." Or as Zig Ziglar puts it, **"You can get everything in life you want if you will just help enough other people get what they want."** In short, he who enriches others enriches himself. That's the beautiful logic. That's the free market at work. But how does it work like that? We are either producers or consumers at any point in time. We can produce what we want to consume, but that isn't very efficient, sometimes even impossible. Are you going to mine the metal ore from the ground and forge it to create the insides of your computer? Are you going to build the CPU logic and operating software completely on your own without relying on knowledge produced by prior people? Of course not. You're better off giving someone what they want (and to do that you must first find out what they want) and using the money they give you in return to buy a computer (or whatever you want) from someone else. Focusing on helping others get what they want and you'll get what you want.

But the mindset you must have is to completely focus on the other person (i.e. don't do things just for your own profit). The science shows those who focus on making money, status, and pleasure are less happy than those who focus on personal growth, relationships, and helping others. Those last items are what you should be making your life goals about. That's what you should be constantly and consistently working on. So don't focus on doing things for others just to get something out of it. Don't use people and love things, instead "Love people, use things." In other words, give and expect nothing in return. And that's the definition of love. You do things for people simply because you love them. You don't keep score.

Here is another paradox that doesn't seem logical at all, whatever is missing from your life, give it and you'll have it! "Be the change you want to see in the world." If you lack fun, give someone else a fun time and you'll often get it too. If you lack friends, go be a friend to someone else. If you lack a job, help someone else get a job, and you'll be surprised how things come back to you. And if you are lonely, go make someone else less lonely and you'll often cure your own as well. If no one is trying to make you happy, go try to make other people happy. It takes experience, but you can often cure what you lack by giving it. Give, but expect nothing in return. This is essentially reversing "The Secret" or the "Law of Attraction." Don't focus on what you want, give it instead. This is what the book, *Emergence: Seven Steps for Radical Life Change*, talks about as one of its steps (and what many believe to be the most powerful step of them all). "Whatever is missing is what you're not giving." When you enter a room, give what appears to be missing. You have that power and duty. You have to realize your life isn't yours in a way. You are just a part of a larger whole. You are here to serve.

Give to others.

If You Want a Life Worth Living, You Must Act

"If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got." —Henry Ford

We've talked about consistent work, but this is somewhat different. Taking action is about facing your fears. Taking action is starting that project you've been scared to do, confronting that person instead of putting it off, actually taking action after reading a self-help book, and trying new things to find out what you like. It means not living in your own little bubble (you can have good, consistent habits and still hide in your own little world). Watching movies and playing video games are not included in this definition of taking action. (Be careful how you spend your time. Don't fill your subconscious with junk.) Those are distractions (and that can include reading self-help books). Those are the activities you use to escape from life. Why do we do this? Fear. Fear of failure, fear of success, fear of losing control, fear of change, and fear of the unknown. Ultimately, it all has to do with the fear of expressing your true feelings and desires. But when you do talk about it (communicate it to others) and start to give in to your true desires (true desires, not unhealthy substitutes) you will realize there was nothing to be afraid of. You become braver. **You get better at facing your fears by facing them.** You must face that resistance to have a life worth living and taking action is how you get better at facing it. (The trick is to keep doing it each day, that's the hard part.) In other words, taking action lets you take more action.

And the more you fail, the more you will succeed. Because with every failure you learn. (Actually, taking action is the *only* way to learn about *your* life. That's why those who just focus on doing, instead of waiting for the perfect opportunity or always reading about it, often make more progress than others in life.) The more you fail, the more you figure out. **Thus, you only fail by avoiding failure.** Trying to find what you are good at (everyone is good at something and we all suck at a lot of things)? You take action to find out! Remember this, everything you read is just theory relative to your life until you try it out. And trying things out is

the *only* way to get empirical evidence for *your* life. The author of a book has no idea what it's like to be you or what is best for you. But the science shows the main difference between people who get results in life and those who get none, between those who have a high sense of self-worth and happiness and those who easily get depressed, is the former are action-orientation. The latter do nothing but think or complain about life. So stop thinking about life (or reading self-help books all the time), stop complaining about life, and take action. Don't wait for motivation or that perfect time to act. Motivation comes *after* you take action. So just take action. Do that one little act that will get your good feelings going for you, then that'll get you to take more, bigger, and better actions. Then you can accomplish a ton. Then you'll change your life.

And, yes, part of taking action involves taking risks. *Everything* in life is risky, but there comes a point where trying to minimize your risk results in you being dead, the very thing you are trying to avoid. That's not a life worth living. To have the life you want, you have to just go for it. **A lot of life is just about putting yourself out there and seeing what works for you.** That's why self-help books rarely help people because those same individuals still won't put themselves out there. But it's never too late. And there's no time like the present.

Take action!

But to Act, You Must First Know What You Want out of Life

"What would you like to do if money were no object? How would you really enjoy spending your life? Do that and forget the money."

—Alan Watts

Whatever you take enough action on you'll eventually succeed at. Whatever you are consistent at you will improve upon. But time is a limited resource, so there are only a few things you can accomplish in life. You don't want to end up regretting your efforts. So you need to be true to yourself. You need to start listening to the call of your heart.

What is your heart's desire? Unfortunately, many have no idea. They just go through life like a zombie. **You need a vision in life or you'll just drift.** Yes, action brings clarity, but what's the point of clarity if there is no destination? Take the time to discover it. Take the time to discover yourself. There is something inside you waiting to come out. (This is *not* about finding your passion or that "one thing" you were destined for. Rather, it's about trusting your gut with what you should be doing with your life. Passion equals your ideal job. Vision equals your ideal life. There is no such thing as an ideal job, but there is an ideal life you should be striving for.)

But if you let people or life events decide things for you, you'll never get what you want, you'll never become happy. Either you genuinely don't care about yourself or you're more concerned about other's opinion about you than your own. Both are signs of insecurity. Both are terrible ways to live. (Part of being happy, as long as you are true to yourself, is learning not to care what other people think.) There's something inside of you that's been dying to come out. There's some project that makes you excited just thinking about it or some direction in life you've always wanted to take. And don't let yourself feel selfish pursuing it. Whether you do what you love, what you hate, or if you do nothing at all, life will go on with or without you. But doing what you love benefits everyone else around you the most in the long-run. You should be excited to wake up

each day. If not, you have forgotten your dreams and you are trying to numb yourself to this truth. You must become aware of what is happening in your life and where you are headed. **When you realize what your vision is, it should excite you.** And when you accomplish it, it'll make you feel alive!

Be true to yourself.

Summary

Let's recap the main lesson in each chapter. Yes, they are the best lessons of self-improvement, but they can be seen as laws, universal laws that will improve your life if you practice them.

The 7 Universal Laws of Self-Help:

1. Discover the truth
2. Work each day
3. Surround yourself with good people
4. Communicate with others
5. Give to others
6. Take action!
7. Be true to yourself

But to take advantage of such laws, to make sure you put them to use, you must practice something I call...

The 8th Concept of Self-Help

“A goal without a plan is only a wish.”

So many self-help books dedicate a paragraph or even a chapter telling the reader that they need to take action, that all their reading is pointless if they don't act on it right away. Then, of course, the reader, you, goes on to read another self-help book. Well, I'm going to do something better, something I think *every* self-help book should tell you to do: **create an action plan!** Yes, some self-help books do have them, but chances are you won't follow them. It needs to come from you. When YOU create the action plan, you'll be invested in doing it. And you can tailor it for your life. But chances are if you don't write an action plan right *now* you won't take action on the material at all. That means all that reading was for nothing. So write your action plan. Then, to make sure you do them, put those items on your calendar and in your daily schedule.

As the book *Think and Grow Rich* says, you must organize your knowledge once you acquire it. And then use it. The book goes on to point out that no successful person ever made it without organized planning. And if a plan failed, they would tweak the plan and try again until it worked. But every successful person had a well-defined plan that he or she began at once, whether they were ready or not, and backed it up with persistence. You are no different from them. So you must do the same.

And when you create your action plan, I would suggest you have it somewhere you will come across often as to remind yourself what is really important in life. This is why I think just a piece of paper in your room is often the best option, as you don't even have to turn on your computer to see it.

While it is up to you to create your action plan, I would suggest first you write down the 7 laws until you can say them from memory. **Truth. Consistency. Community. Communicate. Give. Do. Instinct.** Then score yourself on each one. From there you'll know what areas to focus on. You'll know what to write your action plan about.

However, I do want to say that, in my experience, the lower on the list you start the better. They become less sticky the further down you go, so you'll be less likely you'll get trapped in one. Thus, the best way to go about it is to focus on the 7th law and go backward. (That's the path followed by the person who has the guts to go after what they really want in life.) The worst way is to start from the 1st law and go forward. (That's the path followed by self-help junkies who think that there is something wrong with them and who are always trying to find that "secret" answer to life.) With the latter, you often get stuck in the first, second, and even the third law. (If you do go down this path, try to exercise the 4th law as much as possible, it'll help get you unstuck.)

Starting with the 7th law and going backward, when you are true to yourself, when you are trusting your gut feeling, you will take the right kind of action in life (and usually it'll be the thing that you've been afraid of). Taking the right action will lead to some form of giving to others. Then you'll realize you can only really give what people want if you first figure out what people want. Constant communication with people will eventually lead to your own network of friends. When you have a community you care about (a new family), then you have a strong incentive to work each day to make their lives (not yours) better. When you work each day, you'll have a desire to discover the truth, to learn about the laws of the Universe, so you can perform at your best. So start listening to your heart and do what it's telling you to do.

But whatever path you end up going down, the most important thing is that you start. Remember, when you start taking action, you are going to fail. That's okay because you are going to learn from it. You only fail by avoiding failure. Just focus on doing. Trust yourself. Trust that the Universe will take care of you. Trust that people will help you.

No more information overload. No more reading "new" self-help material. Now is the time to take action. Now is the time to go after your dream.

Now go write down that action plan!

Seven is Too Many

To my shame, as this book was supposed to be the end-all-be-all of self-help books, I continued to consume self-help years after publishing the first version of this book. But it's all just the same information in a new light, there is nothing new under the sun. Then I went on to write another book called *The Last Self-Help Book*. There I talked about how the frequently used number seven (ideas, laws, or whatever) in many self-help books as being too much information for anyone to actively remember to be of any good (and is often just used as a sales tactic as seven comes off as a very attractive number to people for some reason). So I broke it down to just 3 ideas to remember: help yourself, ask for help, and give help to others.

While I thought that was it, I then came across the issue years later of the motivation needed in doing these three ideas. If you can't motivate yourself to do those three simple ideas consistently, they're no good to you. So I then went ahead and published a half-finished book (as I wasn't sure if I would ever complete it) called *END* in which I gave a structured program to do a very long dopamine detox that included planting ideas in your subconscious through repetition of certain thoughts and actions.

And while I did have some success and finally some growth in life with my own program as I was forced to face and end my addictions in life (computers, self-help, and the Internet in general), the benefits didn't last for very long as I eventually returned to my old ways. Then I tried redoing this structured program without much benefit the second time around.

Eventually, I came to the conclusion that you just have to face yourself and your life story. You have to just listen to your intuition (the 7th law) in a sense cause you already know what is right and wrong with your life. **Ultimately, there is just one thing to do: have faith in yourself to solve your own problems.**

But we turn to self-help out of fear of not being able to solve our own problems, out of fear of missing out on some secret knowledge only to be disappointed that this new book said exactly what all the others have

already said one way or another. We tell ourselves once we read this one last book then we'll be ready to finally act only to deceive ourselves.

We often try to grow in comfort, we try to change by simply consuming more knowledge, but that never works.

Taking action and doing what you need to do often isn't sexy and fun like consuming self-help material and is down right boring, painful, and frustrating at times, but it's the only way to get what you want out of life.

Like I said in my other book, there always seemed to be a karmic recoil whenever I successfully implement any ideas from a self-help book. **It's like life really wants you to figure out things on your own.** Even if it means roughing it for a period. And every successful self-help author has the same story of figuring out everything on their own (maybe he or she was influenced by certain cultures, even self-help ones, but ultimately their ideas and successes in life were his or her own). It might have taken them years or even decades, but *they* were the ones who did it. I think life wants you to do the same.

So the seven lessons are things you have to learn on your own to be of any good to you, to really internalize them. Even more novel ideas (although they really aren't that new) like dopamine detoxes, I believe, are also lessons you need to learn on your own.

The most important thing is that you be honest with yourself and your life's story. Chances are you if you ran to self-help you are ignoring something important in your life. Stop ignoring things.

I'll say it again:

The most important thing is that you start being honest with yourself and your life's story.

And if you were really honest with yourself, you would take action on those ideas and truths in your life, you would take the time to figure things out with regards to your life's story.

You don't grow in comfort. If anything, you will probably just stunt your growth or you'll regress in life. So stop trying to grow in the comfort of self-help material.

If you were looking for some foundational knowledge to take with you from self-help, you got it with those seven ideas. But for those ideas to be any good for you to have to discover them for yourself—there is no other way.

The Mystery of Action

When are you going to make your dreams come true? When will you take action?

Action is a mystery. If action, consistent action, were done by more people, then there wouldn't be a self-help industry. Yes, you might get tempted to read another self-help book (even on one about taking action), but I hope you don't.

You just have to embrace the fact that action is what you need and that action isn't always sexy. It can be boring, difficult, disappointing, and scary, but you have to start to have faith in yourself and your ability to figure things out for yourself. And, most importantly, you just have to accept that it'll take time, no matter what you choose to do. So you have to stick with it.

It's about facing life as it is, not as you wish it to be, not in the sugar-coated reality that many self-help books teach you.

It's about taking responsibility for your life despite any circumstances--past or present.

It's about going after what you really want out of life and doing whatever it takes to get it.

And I think the big thing to get yourself self to do this is something I refer to as your "true motivation" in life or what Napoleon Hill calls "definiteness of purpose." Basically, **it's all about figuring out what you really want from life and just going for it.** If you don't know what your true motivation in life is, then it's time for you to find that out. And that doesn't mean another self-help book. That means putting in the work to figure it out for yourself. What is your story?

And, yes, you shouldn't go about getting what you want in life in a bad way. A good means equals a good end, and a bad means equals a bad end—your intentions matter. And what you allow into your life matters. Even your thoughts are significant as to what kind of life you ultimately

produce. Or as Jesus said: “A good tree produces good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit.” In other words, you just need to start doing the things that you know are good for you. **You just need to start doing the right things for your life.** And it'll add up in time to something beautiful. But deep down you already knew that.

However, it's more fun to read another self-help book, as it's feel good candy, but it doesn't really do you any good. Yes, they hit on truths in this universe, but if it doesn't translate into consistent actions, what good does it do you? And any good habits that help you to work towards your dreams pretty much only comes from taking action, so just focus on the action instead.

You really can have just about anything you want in life (but not everything), and it often all comes down to deciding to finally reach for it and not make excuses. **You'll often discover that getting yourself to finally act was the hardest part and all you needed in getting the life you always wanted.** And that you really didn't have to wait for this or that to get what you desired like you kept telling yourself. You definitely don't have to wait until you read another self-help book. And you don't have to wait because somebody or institution told you so.

Go grab the life you want!!!

And part of finally acting is figuring out what you are willing to sacrifice to get. And sacrificing doesn't necessarily have to be painful, it's simply the idea that you can't have it all—there is only so much time in each day and resources to go around—but you can have what you want. So what do you want?

The only way I've ever grown in life was when I started to make sacrifices for what I wanted in life, never from reading a self-help book (though it certainly *feels* like you're growing when you read them). When I finally faced my fears is when things started to change for me. Yes, I had to sacrifice certain comforts in life (at least momentarily), but that's just how life is.

Again, with the idea of sacrifice, it doesn't mean you have to be miserable all the time. Actually, being miserable might be a recipe for disaster as

research keeps showing that happiness often comes before success. As Dale Carnegie puts it: "People rarely succeed unless they have fun in what they are doing." But you do have to choose to do the actions that'll make you and others happy.

But, again, you do have to make sacrifices as there is only so much of you to go around. So it keeps going back to the question: What do you want out of life? Will you answer it or will you, as Napoleon Hill often talks about, just drift? It's easy to drift from one self-help book to another but hard to get yourself to take action to figure out your life.

(You might need to spend (sacrifice) some time unwinding yourself and your life. No self-help book can do this for you. YOU have to do this work. You could definitely get someone to help you like a therapist, a group, or even a friend to help you realize some hard truths about your life, but the real work lies with you and you alone.)

So will you finally take action? Remember, as the Bible says, you reap what you sow. There is a price to pay for everything. Do the work. Make the sacrifice. Sow what you want to reap.

And if you gain without work, then you will be made to eventually pay the price for it one way or another. You either make the sacrifice or the sacrifice will be made for you. You would be much wiser to pick your own sacrifice than to have one forced on you.

And the sacrifice you probably need to make is letting go of consuming self-help. Again, have faith in yourself to figure things out and to solve your own problems in life. If you keep at it you will make progress, things will get easier for you, your confidence with and understanding of life will grow, and, most importantly, you'll be happy that you did it on your own.

If you keep seeking other people's ideas cause it's easy and you avoid taking action, I can almost guarantee you the exact opposite will happen.

Now will you take action or read another self-help book after this one? That's the real mystery.

